pennsylvania musician

magazine

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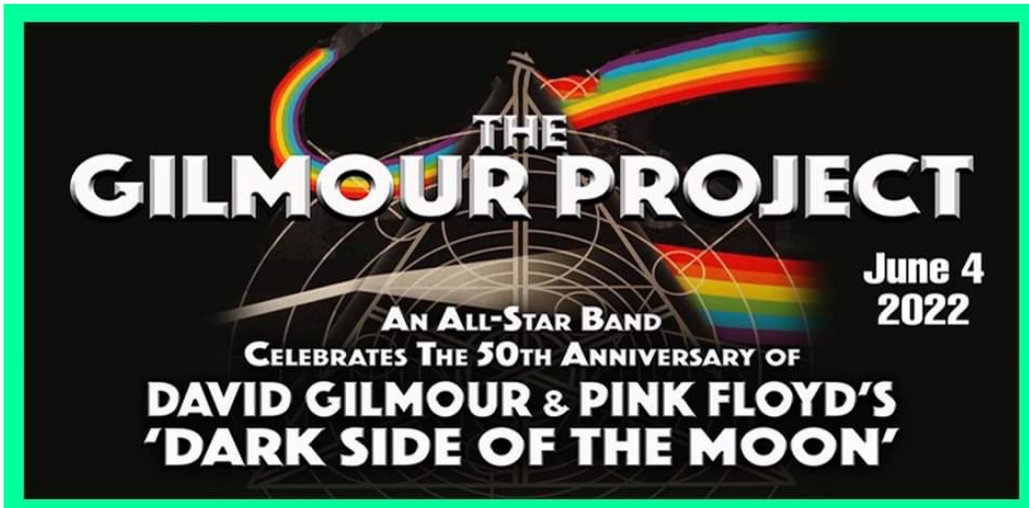
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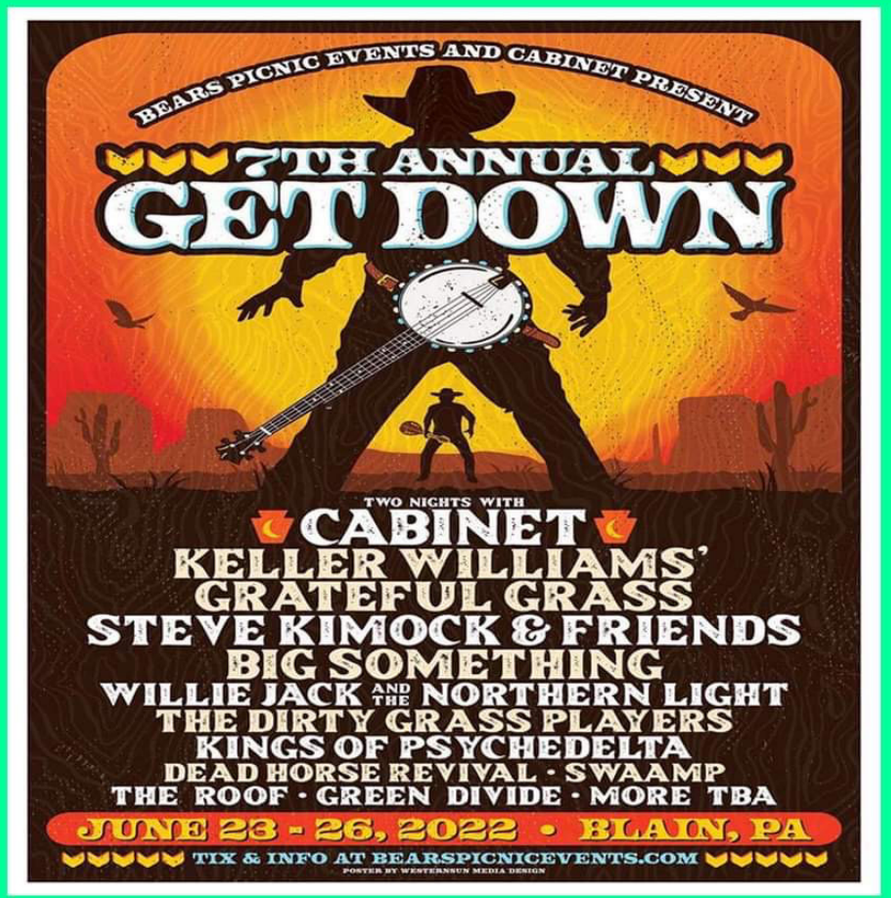
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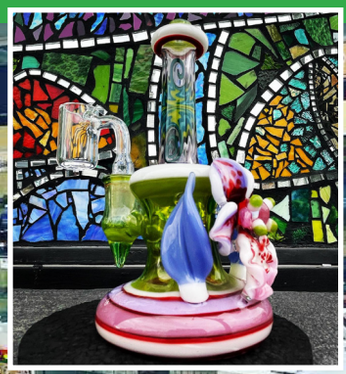

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Editor Ramblings By Josh Noll

Hello Pa music lovers welcome to another issue of the PA Musician Magazine. It's April and Spring is here! Please tell mother nature to put the snow squalls away! I really don't need any white out conditions on the delivery trail this month. I can't really complain about this winter too much. What snow we did have didn't affect my monthly deliveries.

March had a pretty big event for the area, The Central Pennsylvania Music Hall Of Fame induction and awards ceremony took place on the 24th. It's a pretty big event and Brandon Valentine really out did himself this year with a new venue. The Hershey Theatre was the perfect location and made everyone feel like they had stepped into Hollywood for the evening. There were six inductees into the CPMHOF; Les Brown, The Emperors, LIVE, The Del McCoury Band, The Pixies Three and Third Stream. Congrats to them all! I would also like to Congratulate all the nominees and winners from this years Central Pa Music awards. While I can't mention them all I will give a big congrats to Defiant for winning "Best Metal Band"! They have had a great year and are not showing any signs of slowing down. To catch Defiant LIVE and in person. Head over to the winner of "Best Venue", HMAC as they open up for the legendary Doyle on April 6th.

Also a big winner this year was Chris Rider Photography for "Best Rock Photographer", second year in a row. Defending his title against the likes of Rachel Rocks, Francis Axsmith, Doctor D and Rock Documented. It was for sure an honor for the paper having two nominees in the category as this is pretty much what we do. Chris really deserved the win as his photos skills continue to grow with all the hard work he has been putting in.(Maybe next year Rachel Rocks, LOVE YOU!). Go to page 14 to check out some of his latest photos and if you're a band or artist looking for some promo shots give him a ring.

The "Whitey Noll" Lifetime Achievement Award went to John Harris this year. John has given his life to the local music scene and we, at the PA Musician Magazine, know that without his help in the early years we would not exist. John was always a big supporter of the paper and the local music scene. I can say that the best concerts I have attended were put on by Harris; Metallica at Williams Grove with Suicidal Tendencies and Danzig I mean come on people. Not to mention I had all access passes! This show was over twenty years ago and Harris is still booking national acts over at XL Live and other venues. Thanks Uncle Harry for all you have done.

Last big thank you to Brandon Valentine for creating the event and honoring all the PA musicians past and present with this awesome event. The whole thing went off nice and smooth like a jazz concert. Luckily the only crazed person running up on stage and taking selfies was Rachel Rocks, no Will Smith smackdowns. If you missed it this year or if your band or venue was not included. Be sure to go and like and follow the CPMA's facebook page so you can keep up to date and when the time comes, get your band and fans involved. Its hard for them to seek out all the great bands but by participating in the fans voting you can get noticed and hopefully be included next year.

(Little Buddy) Mark Kormanik, Whitey Noll, John Harris

Now let's look at some events coming up to add to your calendar of events. Racehorse Tavern is hitting spring hard starting off the month on the 1st with "Original Music Night" featuring Blind Accuracy, Fink's Constant, Muggsy Jr and Nick Cove & the Wandering. Followed on the 9th with National act Tantric! Racehorse always has live music both inside at night and during the day on his 4 season patio area. Add to that a newly paved parking lot, just in time for Bike Nights starting April 21st. Its a big month for Racehorse so get out there and show some support.

Reverb in Reading has some epic shows coming up like GWAR!! on June 17th! On Saturday April 16th they are hosting the "IRock Radio Birthday Bash 2022"! Featuring From Ashes to New, Fire From the Gods, Blind Channel, Kingdom Collapse and Above Snakes. IRock Radio is celebrating 8 years and doing it in style so get your tickets now and don't miss this show.

Lots of great shows coming up check out page 2 for a list of shows coming up at the Susquehanna Valley Event Center and the Bears Picnic Events. Start planning your summer around your favorite festivals and shows. To get geared up for festival season, check out page 3 for our new advertiser Coexist Glass Gallery in Steelton PA. They are a premium smoke shop with plans to expand into a coffee shop as well. They are working on the Steelton Cannabis Health Expo. The event will take place on June 4 and will be a family friendly environment with info on Cannabis education, dispensaries and much more with live music performances throughout the day.

Well that's it for this month as always please advertise!! Let us help you with promoting your event, band, business, venue, radio station, etc. WE ARE HERE TO SERVE YOU! Email Joshnoll@pamusician.net or call or text 717-636-4203. Have a great day! Over and out.

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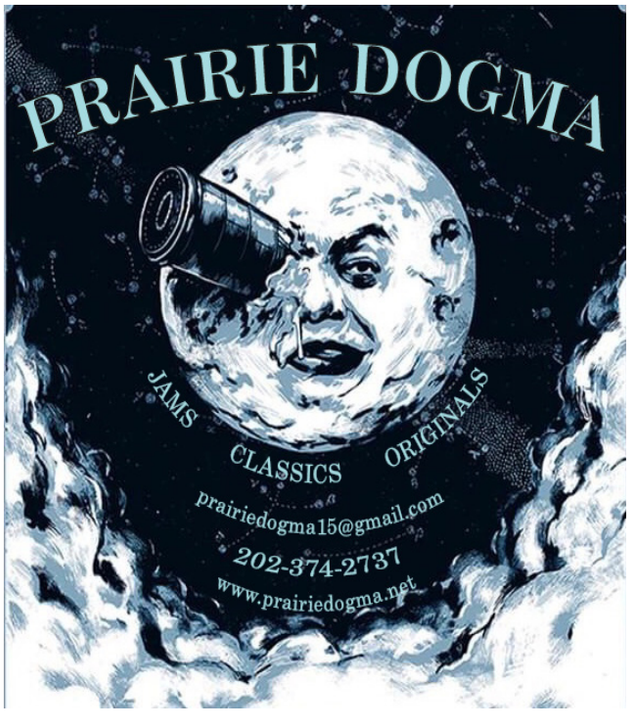

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OUT 'N' ABOUT

By Rachel Rocks

March Madness was a great name to describe this month. I had a super crazy, yet super fun month filled with lots of live music, a quick and crazy trip to the beach, and then ended the month with the Central PA Music Awards! It was a whirlwind of craziness, but so much fun. I'm truly blessed to have a husband that supports my shenanigans and lets me run all over the place, supporting live music, doing what I love to do, and just being me!

The month started quite a while ago at HMAC for a special tribute night with Shout at the Devil (Motley Crue) and Bark at the Moon (Ozzy Osbourne). I haven't seen either band for a really long time, both of them have undergone some band member changes, but both of them still rocked! I'm not sure how Brett Bowman, the lead singer for Shout at the Devil showed up in central PA, but he's definitely a great addition to the scene, and to SATD. It was awesome to see Xj wailing away on the guitar in true Xj fashion again too. Hopefully it won't be another 10 years til our paths cross again. Bark at the Moon quickly snagged your attention playing all of your favorite Ozzy music!

Dave Gates

Don Hosler, their drummer has been telling me about shows and reminding me for years, I'm glad I also got to see these guys again too! They are definitely a great match up to play a show together. There were lots of 80s fans in the house, dancing, singing and having a great time! This night was also super special because we were celebrating my good friend, Vicki Trott's birthday. As a cancer survivor, every birthday is that much extra special. We are all truly blessed to still have Vicki here with us, rockin' along, and having a great time! Happy Birthday Vicki! On a Side Note, congrats to HMAC on winning the Best Live Music Venue for 2021 at the Central PA Music Awards! It was doubly awesome because I'm the one that got to present the award!

Observe the 93rd

The following Wednesday night I headed over to Flinchy's for my first Derek sighting of the month. I love when he plays during the week. It's so refreshing to take a step out of the day work grind for some night time fun! This was an all 90s night, so Derek learned some new songs to stick with the 90s theme. It's always awesome hearing him learn new songs and pushing himself out of his comfort zone. I also saw Derek later in the month at Fratelli's. Fratelli's had a full house and it was standing room only, after Matt played during Derek's break is when he got offered to play his first full show there! Derek, who used to be the shy guy in the band, as close to the back wall as possible, has also just won the CPMA for Best Male Vocalist of 2021. Again! I am super proud of him!! It's a true example of anything is possible if you put your mind to it. During the entire pandemic, Derek kept us all sane by doing Thirsty Thursday Livestreams. They were from his living room to ours, we would all chat, do some shots, and just have a good time! He also wrote songs like a mad man, and kept singing, recording, and releasing music. He definitely didn't waste time during the "lockdown", but took full advantage of a life with less distractions. He truly is an inspiration.

Thursday night it was time for some more live music, Dave Gates was hosting an Open Mic at Boneshire, so Matt and I decided to go check it out. Dave had a great full stage set up with lights and everything. It gave us all a chance to really experience a true stage set up. When I got there, Joe Cigan was on stage and he sounded absolutely amazing, playing some bluesy rock, and even treating us to a few originals. It never ceases to amaze me at all of the talent in our area, and how brave people are to get up and show their talents. Matt Bynum (Matt Jameson Acoustic) stepped up next to play some solo songs, and then we played a few together. After

Joe Cigan

Nail Bite

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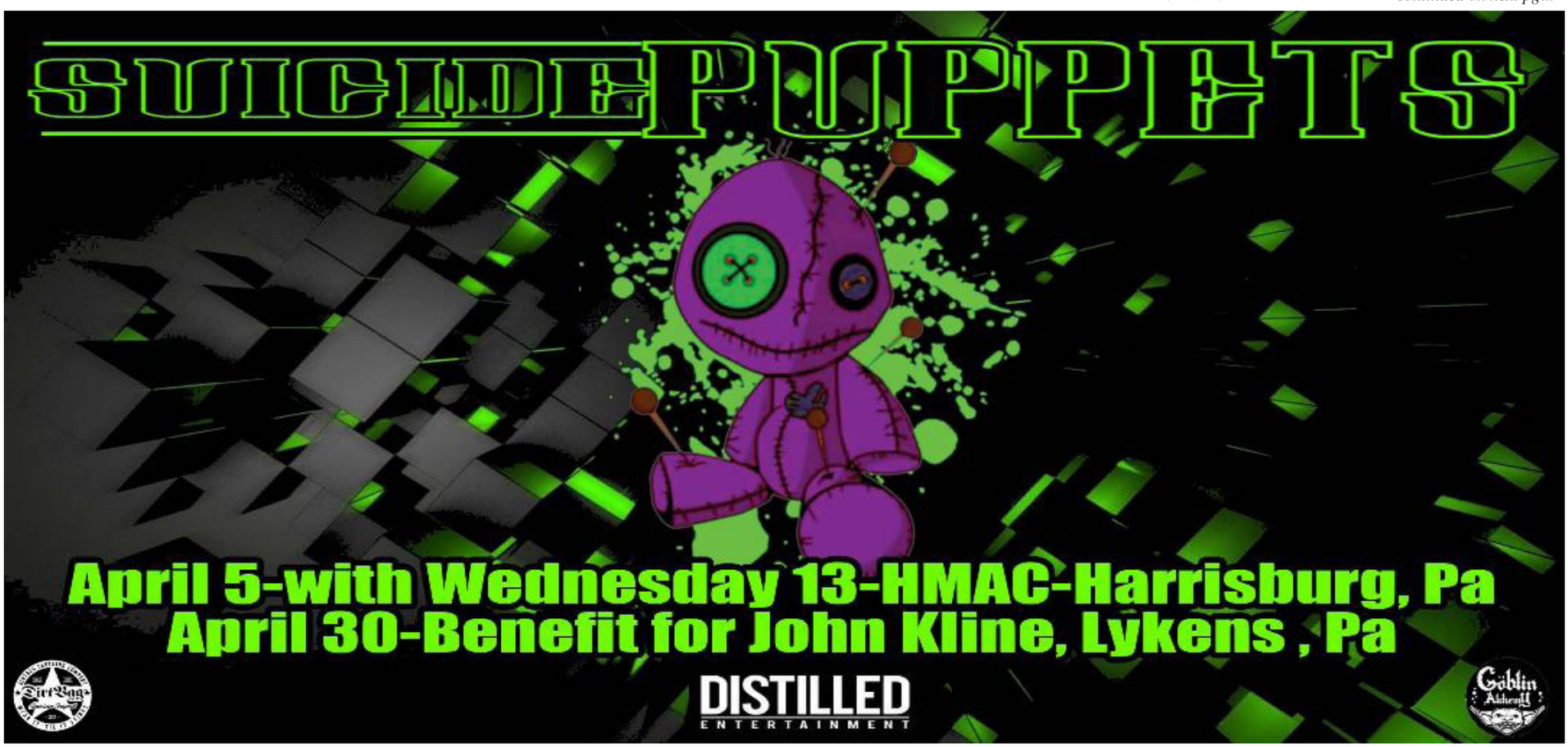

we had so much fun at the open mic, we decided it was time to get real, and start playing music as much and as often as possible. We started an acoustic duo page called, Staying Vertical, which is me on the ukulele and Matt on guitar. We also started Matt's own solo page, Matt Jameson Acoustic. Matt used to play out many moons ago, but I'm so glad he finally got inspired to get back out there. Matt's first solo show is April 9th at Fratelli's in New Cumberland, and our first show as Staying Vertical is May 7th at the Sip n' Dip in Newport which is a Beer and Wine Festival to support the Millerstown Community Swimming Pool. It's very exciting! We've been practicing like crazy, and we are ready to entertain the masses! Thanks Dave, for hosting this open mic, and convincing us it's time to get out there and do this!

Friday night it was a nice, local show right down the street at Spring Gate with Six Bar Break. Representing the band this night it was Ben and Dave. Everytime I see these guys I think they both buy a new gadget or gizmo. Dave has so many interesting percussion gadgets that he can really add a lot of effects to their songs even in a smaller acoustic setting. Ben has his own amazingness with his voice and his amazing guitar skills. Six Bar Break has been releasing a new original song the first Friday every month for all of 2021, and now still going strong into 2022. That's a lot of music! You can check out their music and see where they are playing next at www.sixbarbreak.com.

Vertigo Vultures

Saturday morning started off with an early walk on the Greenbelt with my good friend Michelle. We just kept walking and wound up on City Island where we figured out the Harrisburg Ice and Fire Festival was happening. All of the ice sculptures we say were absolutely gorgeous. I can't imagine all of the time and talent that takes! We also wound up checking out the Beach Bar on City Island. What an awesome set up! They are open Thurs-Sun, and they even have little bubbles to help keep you warm in chilly weather. I saw the band schedule for the night and I saw the band Before the End was playing later in the evening, I heard them play at the Central PA Music Hall of Fame Youth Music Showcase, and

continued on next pg...

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I knew I definitely wanted to see them play again. I gathered up some more friends and headed out for round 2. It was oddly warm and a beautiful night for music! They had a stage set up right on Front St. of Harrisburg, and I got there right in time for the beginning of the show. The talent that these young kids have is crazy! Even seeing Amani and Gilad be able to switch rolls from Drummer to Guitar player just adds to their awesomeness! All of their energy was super crazy and they put on one heck of a performance. It was awesome to see so many young fans out supporting them too. They had a whole big circle of dancers just having a blast! I'm glad to see these young bands getting the opportunity to play at super cool events!

Sunday the fun continued with an afternoon show by DMC Duo at the Vineyard and Brewery at Hershey. I also saw them later in the month at the Fredericksburg Eagle Hotel. Both shows were filled with great music and great friends! At the Eagle Hotel I also had some delicious dinner. If you're looking for an adventure out on the town with great food and on Fridays, Saturdays, and Deck Sundays, check out the Eagle Hotel's ad in this issue and make plans for a trip out there! And, if it's your birthday, it's even better, because their birthday specials are ridiculous! I am super proud to say DMC Duo has stepped out into the world of original music. On March 24th they released their first single, "Love You Anyway" on all of your favorite music platforms. Get out there and give it a listen, you won't be disappointed! DMC Duo is playing like crazy all over Central and Eastern PA, chances are they're playing somewhere near you! Get out there and support live music!

On a super special Sunday night show I zoomed down to The Church for a very special Nail Bite show. They were playing in a Battle of the Bands to play in the Welcome to Rockville show, and they would also get to go on tour with Escape the Fate! The contest was live streamed through DW Presents on Twtich TV. It was very intense… when it was their turn they played for 15 minutes, and immediately following their show the voting window was only open for 1 minute to vote for them. They won their first battle by 14 votes! Then it was time for the finals! At one point over 17,000 people were watching the live stream! Nail Bite rocked like never before and they were the only band in the Battle that also had an audience at their live stream head banging and dancing along! Unfortunately, they lost in the final round, but the exposure they received from this opportunity is just crazy! On April 15th, Nail Bite will be playing in Freedom Hall in Lancaster as part of the Launch Music Festival's Metal Showcase! They are opening for The Bunny The Bar on April 24th at Lovedrafts, then on April 28th they are playing with two other female fronted Metal Bands, Living Dead Girl, and Fate De-Stroyed at Lovedrafts. Check them out in this issue and online for all of the details, www.nailbiteofficial.com.

The next night out was another local stop to New Fangled for Jason Carst. Jason is starting to be TRL (Total Request Live). He at least makes a good attempt to play anything requested. Some of it he handles a bit better than others, but one thing for sure, everyone is having a blast! Jason also takes the time to livestream all of his shows. His fans have gotten used to the ability to stay home, stay safe, but still listen to great music. The super cool part is that Jason can still put his Virtual Tip Jar on the live stream, so people still tip him from home. He actually sometimes makes more money through his Virtual Tip Jar than he does at a show. It's a great thing to consider doing at your shows! It doesn't cost anything with all of the unlimited data plans, but he can be financially beneficial.

After an early night at Fratelli's for Derek and Matt, Angie and I zoomed over to Flinchy's to catch the end of Phil Cannizzaro. It's awesome to see Phil playing more solo shows. He plays a lot of your favorite sing-a-long songs to keep people drinking and having a good time. Flinchy's was packed with just that when we arrived. Phil is practically part of the Flinchy's family, so it was awesome to see so many of his friends and "family" out there supporting him at his show.

On a very weird snowy night in March, Observe the 93rd had their first show up at Shermans Creek Inn in Shermansdale. I'm thrilled to say even with the weather, they still had a packed house at Sherman's Creek. It's awesome to see how the patrons of Shermans Creek just love music, all kinds, from country to rock! OT93 sold quite a bit of merch, CDs, and gained quite a few new fans! These guys have been working hard releasing new music, and even professional videos to go with their songs. They also just won the CPMA for the Best Alternative Rock Band of 2021. I'm super proud of these guys and so happy they got the recognition they deserve. Matt played during their break and got offered the opportunity to possibly play a private show in the near future. I'm telling you, once you hear him play you're going to want him booked at your venue too.

I had another super fun night at the Copper Pub and Grill open mic night. Erika is doing a great job as the host and just keeps bringing in more and more talent. If you'd like to sign up make sure and get there early! So far she's managed to squeeze in everyone who wants to play and it's been a crazy good time! Kudos to Dave for actually booking people and bands that come to play for full paying gigs at the Copper Pub. Open Mics are truly a great place to find the talent you want for your venue! Staying Vertical will be playing there Memorial Day Weekend, May 28th, and we can't wait!! I know Six Bar Break also got a few dates coming up this Summer. There will be lots of fun nights at Copper Pub.

On St. Patrick's Day I actually convinced my husband to go out with us for dinner to Snapper's in Mechanicsburg. Snapper's was going above and beyond with their tempting Facebook posts and delicious festive menu, so we wanted to go check it out, plus our good friend Janet is a bartender there, so it helped seal the deal! After dinner Amy stopped by on her way to Hook & Flask for Cody Wilt and John Rossey. After some convincing and since I was now holding my husband hostage we went down the road to Carlisle. Kris actually had a really fun night (his own words)! We keep trying to convince him to come out more, but ultimately, it's his choice, he has his fun, and I have mine, and then we meet back in the middle somewhere. John and Cody play in a full band called Cold Spring Union. I joined the "Union" a while ago and have become a huge fan of their music. The two of them together acoustic is awesome in it's own way. You can really appreciate their harmonies even more and their amazing guitar work! It was a great show and I'm glad Amy stopped in, so we knew where we could find some live music!

After a very crazy and fast trip to pick up a car from Virginia Beach, I got home all hopped up on Energy Drinks, so decided to drive just a little further down the road back to Copper Pub for the Acoustic Version of Vertigo Vultures. They recently just started their "acoustic option" of the band, but so far it's going very well. After I arrived, I quickly showed their fans you can still dance to music, even when it's acoustic. We created our own dance floor and had a

continued on next pg...

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Fri., April 15th, 7:00 – 10:00 - DOWNTOWN LOUNGE, Lebanon, PA
Sat., Apr. 23rd, Time TBD – EARTH DAY CELEBRATION, Reading, PA
Sat., Apr. 30th, 8:00 - 11:00 – MT. GRETNA HIDEAWAY, Mt. Gretna, PA
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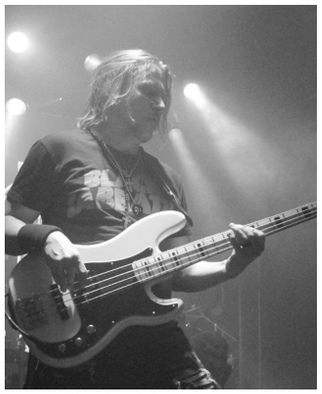
great time dancing and singing along. I'm thrilled to say that in the end we weren't the only crazy people yelling for one more song, the whole bar joined in on the chant! I'm sure you'll be seeing more of the Vertigo Vultures at the Copper Pub because they were a big hit!

Finally, it is time for the highly anticipated review of the Central PA Music Hall of Fame's big night, the CPMAs! This year the CPMAs were at a bigger venue, the Hershey Theatre. It's absolutely crazy being on stage, but the good thing was with their lighting you couldn't see the crowd at ALL. It was just like a big black giant wall! That worked for me because it greatly helped cut back the stage fright! The best part of the CPMAs is seeing so many bands, fans, etc in one place celebrating our Central PA Music Community. It is truly a super beautiful thing! If you want to see all the details on who won the different categories and who was inducted into the Hall of Fame, check it all out at www.cpmhof.com. One big winner was Chris Rider for Best Live Music Photography. I didn't win, but just being nominated was such an honor. Thank you to everyone who voted for me. Better luck next year! When it comes to true awesomeness the right winner should be Chris. His pictures are way better than mine. I've always been more of a quantity type girl, not necessarily quality. I do my best to make everyone look like rockstars, while still dancing and having a good time! I'm so glad Brandon Valentine came up with this idea, and made it become a reality, it is definitely one of the biggest and best nights of the year!

My next night out I headed to Buddy Boy Winery in Duncannon for Tommy B, the guy on our cover this month. I never got a chance to catch a live show, so when I saw one close to home I jumped at the opportunity. All the tables and bar were full, but luckily, I was able to jump on a table with Tommy's friend Trish and be all up close and personal with Tommy for his show. He is quite the one-man band! He had the whole crowd singing along and very surprised at some of his song choices, one second Pat Benatar, and then switch it right over to some John Denver! Buddy Boy loved him so much she had her calendar whipped out before he could even put his guitar way at the end of the night to book him for some future dates! I love watching that happen. It is so rewarding for the musician, and Tommy B definitely deserved it. You can read all about Tommy B and how he got started in the music world and how to get him booked in your music world in his Cover Story article this month!

The last band of the month is Smooth LIke Clyde at Hollywood Casino. It was against the doctor's orders, but when your friends text you and say they are heading to the casino to do some dancing, I unfortunately can't resist, especially for Smooth Like Clyde. Of course, I'll just sit in the back and watch! HAHAHA! I think it only took about 3 songs til we danced our way up to the front. Hey, at least I was wearing my brace! Needless to say, I've spent the last 2 days on the couch, but it was worth it. The guys in Smooth Like Clyde always put on one heck of a show! The place was absolutely packed full of people dancing, singing and having an absolutely fantastic time! I'm so glad Hollywood Casino continues to support our local bands and gives them a place to play, and a place for us to party!

Well, that is finally all for this month! I don't know how much you'll see me throughout April. I have this lovely bum foot in the beginning of the month, and go for some lovely surgery on April 12th. I'm hoping I bounce back quick and get right back there on the dance floor, but April should be a pretty low key month for me! We'll see how that plan goes! Please get out there and Support Live Music! Party for me this month!! I'll be laying in bed scrolling Facebook living vicariously through you, so tag me, and let me see what I'm missing!!! Have a rockin' month!!



Bark at the Moon

NATIONALS

By Eric Hoffman

Greetings Rockers 'N' Rollers! Cincinnati-based band, Foxy Shazam, returned to the road for the first time since Oct 2014 when they disbanded. The band known for their wild performances, theatrics and over-the-top lyrics played major cities including Chicago, Boston, New York - before stumbling upon Millersville, PA. Nice work to the venue Phantom Power who are putting their stamp on the local scene with great shows like KIX, NRBQ, The Toasters, Heart Bones to name a few. Industrial band, Ministry, visited Baltimore Soundstage on March 6th as part of "The Industrial Strength Tour" featuring The Melvins and Corrosion of Conformity. Al Jourgensen and the band were amazing with a chain-link fence separating the group from the pit and playing hits, "Just One Fix," "NWO" and "Search & Destroy." Irish band, Inhaler, are currently touring America in support of their debut, "It Won't Always Be Like This" - the young band from Dublin began in 2016 and singer, Elijah Hewson, is the son of U2 frontman, Bono. Inhaler have a sound reminiscent of U2 in the early 80s and have sold-out nearly every show on their current tour, including the recent 9:30 Club gig in Washington DC on March 7th.

There were great local shows as well .. Anthrophobia blew the roof off West York Inn on February 26th. Shea and Swish made a great return to Sons & Daughters of Italy on March 3rd. And a very good tribute show to The Cure (Gathering Gloom) and The Smiths (Caligula Blushed) at Hershey's Englewood on March 12th.

The month ended with the 3rd annual Central Pennsylvania Music Awards on March 24th at the Hershey Theatre. This year's 6 inductees included: Les Brown, The Emperors, LIVE, The Del McCoury Band, The Pixies Three, and Third Stream. A highlight of the evening was seeing longtime friend and concert promoter, John Harris Jr., receive the Whitey Noll Lifetime Achievement Award - congratulations Harris for over 4 decades of shaping Central PA's music scene.

Foo Fighters drummer Taylor Hawkins died on March 25th at the age of 50. The band was scheduled to play at a festival in Bogota, Colombia that same night. Hawkins' final concert was on March 20th at another festival in San Isidro, Argentina. He was Alanis Morrissette's touring drummer when he joined Foo Fighters in 1997. Lead singer, Dave Grohl, wrote in this 2021 book calling Hawkins his "brother from another mother, my best friend, a man for whom I would take a bullet." Hawkins is survived by his wife Alison and their three children.

Metallica and Billy Joel played separate shows on consecutive evenings to over 80,000 fans at Las Vegas' Allegiant Stadium. The show billed as "Two Epic Shows…One Unforgettable Weekend," to serve as a model for future stadium touring. Having live performances over the course of 24 hours by two giants also allowed for a number of cost-saving synergies, including shared stage production, promotion, marketing, PR, ticketing, and more. The shows took place on February 25th & 26th and grossed $13.8 million. Both groups stayed at the same hotel, "It was like summer camp in the lobby with the Metallica and Billy camps all knowing each other. It was very exciting and uplifting to see the camps together."

Dolly Parton has announced she is pulling out of this year's nominations for the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, saying she hasn't "earned that right." The music icon explained her decision noting she did not want to take votes away from the remaining nominees. "Even though I am extremely flattered and grateful to be nominated, I must respectfully bow out. This has however inspired me to put out a hopefully great rock n' roll album at some point in the future, which I have always wanted to do! My husband is a total rock n' roll freak, and has always encouraged me to do one." Other artists who have made both the Rock Hall and Country Hall of Fame include Brenda Lee, Johnny Cash, Elvis Presley and Hank Williams.

Tina, John Harris & Eric at the CPMA Awards

Pearl Jam is ready to get back out on the road after having to call off their 2020 tour, and announced rescheduled North American tour dates. The band added Camden, NJ Waterfront Pavilion on September 14th, right before their show at NYC Madison Square Garden on September 11th. The 19-date tour will feature Josh Klinghoffer opening with his solo project, Pluralone.

The Rolling Stones will return to Europe this summer to play 14 shows in ten countries. The tour, titled "Sixty" in celebration of the legendary band's 60th anniversary. June 9th, they play Liverpool soccer stadium for the Stones' first performance in Liverpool in over 50 years. The band will also play 2 nights at London's Hyde Park, where they played a free concert in 1969 to a crowd estimated between 250,000 and half a million people.

Tina & Eric with Corrosion of Conformity

The Rolling Stones will once again be joined by long-time collaborator Steve Jordan, who stepped in after Charlie Watts passed in 2021.

My Chemical Romance just added 14 new arena shows to its long-awaited North American reunion tour this summer. MCR first reunited on stage in December 2019 at Los Angeles Shrine Hall, marking the band's first concert in more than seven years. The band visits Philadelphia's Wells Fargo Center on August 29th.

Alanis Morissette continues celebrating 25 years of her album Jagged Little Pill with a 2022 World Tour. In addition to Europe, Morissette will play 7 shows in America including PNC Bank Arts Center in Holmdel, NJ on July 21st. Garbage will provide support.

Lady Gaga's long-awaited "Chromatica Ball" is due to arrive this summer and will see the pop singer performing in stadiums. The trek visits Washington DC's Nationals Park on August 8th and East Rutherford, NJ Metlife Stadium on August 11th.

Cancellations for concerts in Russia keep pouring in as artists stand up for peace and show solidarity with Ukraine. The latest cancellations include performances from Green Day, Twenty One Pilots, Nick Cave, Bring Me The Horizon, Yungblood and Franz Ferdinand. The Killers and Iggy Pop have nixed their respective July appearances at Park Live Festival in Moscow. Live Nation has stated that it won't be doing business with Russia, effective immediately, "We will not promote shows in Russia. We're in the process of reviewing our vendors so we can cease work with any and all Russian-based suppliers."

Heavy metal titans Metallica have announced what they are saying will be their only two summer stadium shows in 2022. Highmark Stadium in Buffalo, NY on August 11th and Pittsburgh's PNC Park on August 14th. Both shows will feature Greta Van Fleet and Ice Nine Kills. While the band says this will be their only stadium shows, Metallica does have festival appearances booked including Lollapalooza, BottleRock Napa Valley, Boston Calling, Copenhell, Pinkpop, Rock Werchter and more.

APRIL SHOWS: Richie Ramone - Harrisburg HMAC Apr 2. Doyle (Misfits) - Harrisburg HMAC Apr 6. Bright Eyes - Philadelphia Met Apr 8. Bright Eyes - Washington DC Anthem Apr 9. Jet Silver - Lancaster Tellus Apr 9. Elton John - Hershey Giant Center Apr 13. Joan Jett - Reading Santander Apr 14. Fontaines DC - Philadelphia Underground Arts Apr 22. Jimmie's Chicken Shack - Mechanicsburg Lovedrafts Apr 23. Dead Milkmen - Harrisburg XL Live Apr 23. Lars Frederiksen (Rancid) - Baltimore Ottobar Apr 26. Bouncing Souls - Millersville Phantom Power April 30th.

www.pamusician.net

Tommy B ENTERTAINMENT

Whoo-Hoo.. Is Tommy B?

By Rachel Rocks

Tommy B is originally from Bristol County, MA. When he first came to Carlisle, he used to go into the Carlisle Eagles Club with his stepdad, Jon, they called him Boston Jon, and referred to Tommy as Tommy Boston, and later shortened it to Tommy B. Needless to say the name stuck, and when he signed up for his first open mic he used the name Tommy B, and the rest is history. You can find him on all of the social networks using the full name, Tommy B Entertainment.

Tommy B started playing guitar in 2009, but didn't start playing out in front of the public until January of 2021. Tommy wasn't really expecting much that first year, but before he knew it, he wound up playing 53 shows! He wasn't even really "ready" to start playing his own shows, but one night he decided to stop in to the Shermans Creek Inn for Colby Dove's open mic, Tommy played 3 songs, and he was hooked! Before he knew it, Troy, from the Shermans Creek Inn was booking him for his 1st show! It all seemed to move so quickly! Now, here we are a year later, and he already has over 64 shows booked for 2022, and he's on his road to 100 Shows!! That's right! In 2022, his goal is 100 shows! Help him reach his goal, you can give him a call to get him booked at your venue or private party, 717-462-1300.

I had the privilege of going to see Tommy B perform at Buddy Boy Winery. He could easily be classified as a one man band. He plays on a 12-String guitar, while sitting on a cajon, that he plays with a kick pedal, but it's also attached to an effects pedal, so he has a cowbell and a cymbal he can also play with his feet! Meanwhile, he also has special effects on his voice, and he has a looper pedal! There is so much happening all at once, it's overwhelming to watch, I can't imagine trying to play it all, and sing at the same time! Those were the only instruments I saw that night, but I'm also told he can play the ukulele, bass, omni-chord and keyboard. He also plays a large variety of songs and he has an amazing range. At Buddy Boy I heard everything from Blister in the Sun, where the crowd was yelling, "More Cowbell" all the way to Pat Benetar, John Denver, Rio from Duran Duran, and even some Sweet Dreams made even sweeter on the looper machine. Tommy got a great response from the crowd and the owner, so much so, that she had her scheduling book open before he even set down his guitar, to book him for more shows through the end of the year. On a side-note of Tommy, he is obsessed with owls: he wears a great big owl ring, his guitar strap is owls, he brings special owl artwork to his shows, and he even has a tip jar made of owls with a sign that says, "Please feed the owls!"

Not only does Tommy cover a lot of music, but he also sneaks in a few originals. He is currently working on his own EP, and he's also recording an EP with one of his friends, Jake Hebert. Jake and Tommy are huge Simon & Garfunkel fans, so their EP will have 3 cover songs, and 2 originals. Tommy and Jake have been friends for years, and have played tons of music together, so this seemed like the perfect thing for them to do next. Tommy also fills in with Joe Cooney & Friends on drums. His original and favorite instrument will always be the drums! Plus, he likes sitting behind the kit and just jamming out without having an overwhelming amount of responsibility!

When Tommy isn't busy writing and playing music, he also has his own YouTube Channel where he hosts a weekly show that airs a new episode every Monday called, The Scene with Tommy B. You can check out past episodes and catch all the new ones at youtube.com/tommybentertainment. He is currently scheduling interviews with artists, influencers, etc. He films everything in advance, so you don't have to worry about stumbling through uncomfortable moments! If you want to sit down and talk to Tommy B, give him a call, and he'll be glad to get you on his schedule. I'll be sitting down with Tommy at the end of the month. I'm looking forward to talking to him about How to help a photographer make you look like a rockstar! Every episode is completely different, make sure and check it out!

Tommy has quite a few shows coming up in April: the 14th he's at The Bus in Burnham, the 15th he's at Thirsty Farmer in Biglerville at 5pm, Fri. April 22nd at The Eagles in Carlisle at 7:30, and April 23rd he'll be banging the drums with Joe Cooney & Friends at the Copper Pub in Harrisburg. Whoo-Hoo knows, I'm sure he already added even more shows, you can check out his full schedule, and even listen to some music at www.tommybentertainment.com.

Being a musician takes up tons of time and energy, and Tommy B wouldn't be able to do what he does without the amazing support from his Girlfriend, Parents, and his beautiful Daughter. She is his #1 cheerleader!

If you'd like to get Tommy B scheduled at your venue or private party and help him reach 100 shows in 2022, you can give him a call at 717-462-1300, or email: tommybentertainmentandmusic@gmail.com, or you could always send a Messenger Owl!

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Apr. 9 Party Tyme Karaoke • 9-12
Apr. 16 Irish Music • 5-7
Full Circle Band • 9-12
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RIDER'S ON THE STORM

By Chris Rider

March is almost done, and here I sit listening to some tunes and cranking out my article wondering who pissed Mother Nature off LOL. Despite her bipolar behavior, it was still a great month for music. Between the return of The Badlees, the CPMHOF's Central Pennsylvania Music Award show, and a mind-boggling number of music shows (local, national and even international)...a person really can't find any excuse for not being able to find a show to go out & support.

My first trip was down to The Englewood. Have I mentioned how beautiful this venue is? They've got a great stage, great setup on that stage, great food and beer, and they bring in some awesome acts, so what's not to love? This particular trip was extra special to me, bringing back memories of sitting with my brother back in the 90's and listening to a cd he'd just bought: "Diamonds in the Coal" by The Badlees. My brother still has that cd and listens to it from time to time, so he was excited for me when I told him I'd be attending The Badlees' first show in years (not counting their reunion performance at the CPMA's last year of course!). When they opened up ticket sales for the Saturday show, they'd sold out in less than 24 hours which convinced them to add a second show for Friday night...which sold out in 30 minutes. This speaks to how big their fanbase still is, and to the love for their music. When Pete and the boys took to the stage, you'd never have guessed it'd been a bit since they were up there. Their connection with their fans was unreal...and something that I love to see from bands no matter how long they've been around. This was a pure Central PA Rock and Roll show...these guys loved being on stage, and they belong there. Playing favorites like "Fear of Falling" and "Angeline", and closing out their encore with The Band's "Take A Load Off"...it really was a magical night. They didn't give any details that evening, but did say there would be more shows announced in the future so keep an eye open. I know they have already booked as the headliner for Northumberland's 250th Birthday Bash on June 4th...and I have reason to believe we'll see more announcements soon!

My next trip was to Liquid Noise Brewing in Marysville to see Patrick Cusick do a solo acoustic set that sometimes included harmonica. Side note – it's hard for my brain to process how to play a guitar alone...or play it and sing...and it blows my sometimes simple mind when I see someone playing guitar AND harmonica together, and doing it well! Patrick covered a wide range of tunes from the 50's through the 90's including Zeppelin's "Rock & Roll", Springsteen's "How Long", and Supertramp's "Give A Little Bit". It made for a great night that we enjoyed quite a bit.

RELENTLESS SOULS

CRIPPLED BUT FREE

A few days later, we headed down to the beautiful Hershey Theater for the 3rd annual Central Pennsylvania Music Award ceremony put on by the Central Pennsylvania Music Hall of Fame and sponsored by The Englewood. Every year this event grows by leaps and bounds, but it's main goal remains the same: to recognize and celebrate the incredible music scene that we have here. The red carpet event prior to the award show was amazing, and I loved seeing so many of the great local musicians that work so hard, and that I'm proud to call my friends. I don't have the room to cover each award category, each nominee & each winner, but you can see the whole list at www.cpmhof.com/awards. I was once again nominated in the Best Photography category, and for the second year in a row I brought home the award! I was speechless when I heard my name called...humbled, and honored. To those that nominated and voted for me, thank you so much. To those that nominated and voted for any of the other nominees, thank you for that just as much! I'd like to take a moment to mention the other nominees: Frances Axsmith, Doctor D Photography, Rock Documented, and PA Musician's very own Rachel Rocks. Each and every one of you truly inspire me, and help motivate me to do what I do. I appreciate each of you. Ya'll rock and I'm proud to call you my peers. To all the other inductees, nominees and winners in each category, congratulations! Don't see someone nominated that you think should be? Awesome! Please make sure to nominate them when nominations open up for next year's awards. Get your friends and family to nominate them too, the more the better! Once again, thank you to the CPMHOF for being such an incredible organization, and doing what you do. It's very much appreciated.

Next up was a trip back to The Englewood. Opening up the show was Hershey local Corinna Joy, a solo keyboard musician playing a mix of originals and covers including "Many Miles" by Sara Bareilles...she sang with a sweet, soulful and sometimes powerful voice that everyone in the crowd really enjoyed. Headlining the show was Rhett Miller of The Old 97s, currently on a solo tour. Rhett played a solo acoustic performance with a high energy pop-rock feel to it. He brought in a great sized crowd, many of who had driven from pretty far to see him play. Rhett played a great mix of songs including a song that he'd written with Brandi Carlisle for Old 97's, and performed in a duet with Corinna Joy called "Good With God".

The following day I headed down for my first visit to Lovedraft's Brewing Co in Mechanicsburg for The Evening Sun Festival, put on by Lovedraft's and 717 Entertainment, LLC. This was a last minute trip out as I had plans that evening, but I couldn't pass up seeing at least a few of the bands scheduled for the day at this event. Over the course of about 7 hours, they had 11 hard rock, punk, and metal bands scheduled for this show. As I already was scheduled for a show later that evening, I was able to see the first 5 bands...if they were any indication of the rest of them, this entire lineup was fire. First up was Harrisburg based punk band Coalstate. These guys came out and kicked off the day with a lot of loud energy. They did a great job of warming up the crowd. Next up was Central PA based Alt-Rock band Number Of The Sun. These guys played really well, they had a great sound with solid melodies and vocals. Third on the bill is a band I've seen a time or two, although it'd been a year or three: Williamsport based hard rock band Audiobox. Still a trio, although with a new (and I might add VERY energetic!) bass player, Matt and the fellows brought out a great set of originals and covers including Manson's "Beautiful People". Fourth on the bill was a band that readers of our magazine are no doubt familiar with: Six Bar Break. Somehow, this was my first time seeing these guys play, but they killed it from the start with their hard rock high energy set. The last band I saw was Relentless Souls, a Metalcore & Hard Rock band based in Ellicott City, Maryland. These guys clearly drank a case of Red Bull prior to their set as the energy and constant motion on stage was incredible...and tough to photograph LOL. I really enjoyed their set that included originals and a cover or two including an awesome version of Linkin Park's "One Step Closer".

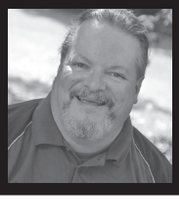
From there I headed up to Shermans Dale to Sherman's Creek Inn for a show by Fell From Zero, a Harrisburg area based hard rock/metal band. They played a whole slew of covers, starting off with Foo Fighters' "All My Life", Rage Against The Machine "Guerilla Radio", and Tool's "Sober". These guys big energy, a great song selection and put on a killer show that had a packed house dancing.

My final trip for the month was back down to Lovedrafts Brewing to see my buddies in Crippled But Free play. A Central PA Grateful Dead tribute band, these guys do an awesome job of bringing their fans the Grateful Dead sound and experience. Playing songs like "West LA Fadeaway", "Sugar Magnolia", and Tennessee Jed...this was a great way for me personally to wind down a bit from a crazy and busy weekend. After being

RHETT MILLER

to Lovedrafts twice over the weekend, I have to say...their beer selection and food menu is simply amazing. I had a few different beers of theirs as well as their "Deadwood" sandwich with chopped brisket, pulled pork, pickled onion and other deliciousness, and I was amazed. Definitely a place worth checking out!

So there it is, my month of music through my eyes and ears. Just a reminder: if you've got a show coming up that I should see, make sure to send me an invite, shoot me an email or a message, let me know about it. Venues: please don't hesitate to reach out to me as well. The majority of the shows that I go and shoot I find out about through invites from all of you or your friends. Hit me up on facebook: @chrisriderphotography or email: chrisriderphotography@gmail.com, stop me if you see me out & around and say hi. Until next month...go find some live music and give them and the venue your support, they truly need it more now than they ever did.



THE PROFESSOR

By Jim Price

Although howling winds and snow squalls are blasting through outside as I compile this month's article, spring warmth should win control of the weather battle in coming weeks, and live music should begin its migration outdoors by the end of this month. (Huntingdon's Mayfest happens on April 30, and the 75th Pennsylvania Maple Festival in Meyersdale takes place during the last two weekends in April.)

In the meantime, lots of live music highlights have been happening indoors in recent weeks…One of the big highlights in recent weeks was Skid Row's visit to Altoona's historic Mishler Theatre in late February before a sold-out house. This was an excellent concert…The current edition of Skid Row – original guitarists Dave "Snake" Sabo and Scotti Hill plus founding bassist Rachel Bolan, along with singer ZP Theart (the original frontman for DragonForce) and drummer Rob Hammersmith – lit up the Mishler stage with a spirited set of their best-known tunes, taken mostly from their first two albums, their self-titled 1989 debut and 1991's "Slave to the Grind." Setting the tone with "Slave to the Grind," the group fired through numbers such as "The Threat," "Piece Of Me," "Livin' on a Chain Gang" and "Big Guns" before arriving at their first Top Ten hit, "18 and Life." After following with "Makin' A Mess" and "Rattlesnake Shake," Rachel addressed the audience, expressing appreciation for being able to again entertain audiences after two years of not being able to do so due to COVID-19. He thanked everybody in attendance for enabling him and the rest of the group to be able to earn their livings performing music on stages. He then fronted Skid Row on their version of the Ramones' "Psycho Therapy" (from their 1992 remakes EP "B-Side Ourselves"). After the power ballad "In A Darkened Room," Dave the "Snake" addressed the crowd, expressing his thanks for their support and leading everyone in a "team chug" before he and Skid Row launched into an extended version of "Monkey Business," with he and Scotti Hill sharing and dueling guitar leads in an exciting display. This launched the homestretch of the performance, as Skid Row performed their other Top Ten hit, "I Remember You," followed by the fast and furious "Riot Act" and the finisher, "Youth Gone Wild," which erupted into a crowd sing-along. You could tell Skid Row was happy to be back in front of audiences, as the COVID-19 shutdown gave them a renewed appreciation of being

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The Professor continued....

able to play music entertain people. (Skid Row announced late last month that they now have a new singer, as Sweden's Erik Grönwall has replaced ZP Theart.)

It seems more and more like St. Patrick's Day has expanded into an entire season. It definitely seemed that way this year, with almost the entire month of March featuring St. Patrick's and Irish-related events. The season started early last month in these parts with McGarvey's welcoming the return of Chicago-based Celtic rock greats The Tossers, headlining a four-band bill. Pittsburgh's Bearded Bastard Irishmen kicked off the fun with their rowdy, high-powered set. With Stephen Weiss now playing violin, frontman Jimmy Bastard and the Irishmen tore through many of their Celtic-geared punk-rocking favorites; including their version of "All For Me Grog," "Drinkem' Drankem' Drunkem,'" the pirate-themed rocker "Mutiny," "Sail On, Sail Away," "Red," "Whiskey, Rum, Bourbon, Beer" and the title to their most recent album, "Drinkin' to the Dead" to end the set. Local Irish rock favorites Full Kilt continued with their blend of rocking Irish music and Irished-up rock tunes. Singer and guitarist Mike Zerbee, bassist and singer Chris Myers, fiddle player Mandy Passmore-Ott and drummer Jake Yarnish played their versions of Irish favorites like "Johnny Jump Up," "Irish Rover" and "Whiskey You're the Devil," along with their Irish-flavored takes on the Rolling Stones' "Paint It Black," Queen's "Fat Bottomed Girls," Jethro Tull's "Locomotive Breath" and others. Next was New Jersey-based Crazy & the Brains, who introduced a unique sound reminiscent of 1980s-era new wave punk with touches of Iggy Pop and Clash flavors. Five members strong, Crazy & the Brains triggered cheering and dancing with their versions of Iggy Pop's "Punk Rocker," Jim Carroll Band's "People Who Died," and original songs like "Break Free," "Hot Sauce," "Oh Oh I Love Her So" and more. And The Tossers finished out the night with their distinctive Irish pub rock and folk sound. Arriving on the stage decked in McGarvey's main man Rich McGarvey's "Father Rich" attire, singer and group founder Tony Duggins led The Tossers on an assortment of their tunes, ranging from tough rockers to sullen pub ballads. The group did several numbers from their latest album "Smash the Windows" such as the leadoff instrumental "Humors of Chicago," "Erin Go Bragh," "Mairi's Wedding" and "The Horses," as well as songs from their previous albums such as "Tell Me Ma" and "Wherever You Go." Tony sang it all with his gruff, rugged style, lending a distinct personality to The Tossers' signature sound. All four bands provided the packed house with a merry and rowdy good time.

After not being able to happen the past two years due to COVID-19, the Gallitzin Fire Company's 12th annual St. Patrick's Day Party returned to the Gallitzin American Legion's Oriental Ballroom during the weekend before St. Patrick's Day. It was again great to see a large crowd, decked out in green, back and having a fun night of food, refreshments, door prizes, 50/50's and musical entertainment from Full Kilt and the Giants Of Science. Before the music, the event's organizer, longtime Gallitzin firefighter Chris "Dauber" Cox, shared a few words; battling cancer for nearly a year, Chris encouraged everybody to have a good time and share their photos from the night with him, before sharing a toast with the crowd. Full Kilt then took care of the Irish music side of the evening, playing two sets of Irish folk and pub favorites, original songs, fiddle tunes and Irish-flavored renditions of classic rock and pop hits. Some of their highlights included their audience participation "clapping contest" version of "Whiskey in the Jar," other audience participation numbers such as "The Old Dun Cow," "The Scotsman Song," "Mary Mack" and Smokie's "Living Next Door to Alice" (complete with audience-improvised "Where the f#@% is Alice" response). Full Kilt also pulled out tunes from Dropkick Murphys and Flogging Molly, Irish takes on numbers from Charlie Daniels Band, Queen, Rolling Stones, and a version of "An Irish Party in Third Class" from the movie "Titanic." The Giants Of Science then triggered the dance party portion of the night, filling the floor in front of the stage with their blend of mostly 1980s rock and pop favorites. Kicking off with Gary Numan's "Cars," the Giants Of Science cast of singer and guitarist Mick, bassist and singer Johnny 5, keyboardist and singer Scotty B and drummer Steve kept the music continuous over two sets as they did favorites from James, REM, Tom Petty, Simple Minds, Modern English, The Cure, Men At Work, Soft Cell, Bruce Springsteen, Chumbawamba, Frankie Goes to Hollywood, GoGo's, A-ha and many more. Hats off to the Gallitzin Fire Company, the Gallitzin American Legion, all the volunteers who helped out, both bands, the production crew of Ray Buksa and Greg Cveykus for the great sound and illumination, everyone who attended, and "Dauber" for organizing this night which put smiles on the faces of many people…An excellent time!

On St. Patrick's night, I checked out The Dillons from Johnstown as they performed at The Brick On Front in Cresson. Ed and Ruschelle Dillon both sing, with Ed on bass and Ruschelle on acoustic guitar, and Jason Selfridge plays lead guitar. The Dillons kept spirits happy with their blend of favorites from the likes of John Mellencamp, Joan Jett, Poison, Eagles, Rolling Stones, Neil Diamond, Pink Floyd and more. Both Ed's and Ruschelle's voices were in good form, and they often blended for some sharp harmonies, while Jason executed clean and precise guitar leads throughout the evening. Some highlights included Ruschelle's renditions of Blondie's "One Way or Another"

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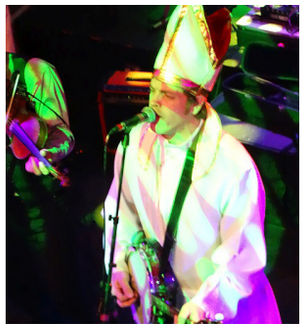

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Mike Zerbee & Mandy Passmore-Ott / Full Kilt

The Professor continued....

and Fleetwood Mac's "Landslide," and Ed singing Johnny Cash's "Folsom Prison Blues," Pink Floyd's "Comfortably Numb" and A Thousand Horses' "Smoke."

Since 2004, Mac's Irish Bash – named in memory of former civic leader and Altoona city councilman Dick "Mac" McEldowney – has raised more than $325,000 to help out area students in their academic endeavors via the McEldowney Academic Scholarship Fund. I finally got to experience this local St. Patrick's Day tradition for my first time when this year's event took place at Altoona's Blair County Convention Center the night after St. Patrick's Day. A large audience of mostly green-clad celebrants filled the venue to enjoy food, drink, basket giveaways, merriment and live music. Johnstown sextet The Irish Pretenders kicked off that music, performing traditional Irish and Celtic folk and pub songs, classic rock and more. Led by singer and guitarist John Skelley, the Irish Pretenders did a wide variety of material over their two sets, including Irish numbers such as "All for Me Grog," "Leave Her, Johnny," "Whiskey Row," "Sailing Ships and Sailing Men," "Home Boys Home," "The Boys of the Old Brigade," "A Nation Once Again," "Red Rose Café," "The Boys of Wexford," "Whiskey in the Jar" and others. They also performed their own variations on CCR's "Bad Moon Rising," John Denver's "Take Me Home Country Roads," Steve Earle's "Galway Girl" and "Copperhead Road," and more. Shallow 9 then took the stage to commence the dance party, doing a variety of pop, rock, funk, hip-hop and dance hits. Singer Erika Marino-Ankeny, guitarist and singer Ryan Weaver, lead guitarist Greg Larrimore, bassist Mitch Neuder and drummer Todd Harshbarger immediately filled up the dance floor and kept it churning over three sets with tunes from Cee-Lo Green, Paula Abdul, Outfield, Pat Benatar, Tom Petty, Lady Gaga, Wheatus, 4 Non Blondes, Charlie Puth, Alanis Morisette and many others. Shallow 9 also broke out several funk, dance and rock medleys, and got their Irish up with a version of the Cranberries' "Zombie." Mac's Bash was again a big success, with a large amount of money raised to help college-bound students in their educational endeavors.

Closing the book on my St. Paddy's weekend and season was Felix & the "Hurr-O'Canes" at Altoona's Black & Gold Tavern. Each Sunday night is an adventure – namesake, singer and guitarist Felix Kos, bassist and singer Jeff Clapper, and drummer and singer Bob Watters never use a setlist, allowing the audience vibe to guide their song selection on any given night. This week's edition started out bluesy, with the Hurricanes doing numbers from Freddie King, Albert King, Eric Clapton and Jimi Hendrix. They broke into a version of Glen Campbell's "Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head," ventured southern with tunes from the Allman Brothers, ZZ Top and Charlie Daniels Band, and did original tunes such as the instrumental "Whirlwind," "Black Widow," the Memphis-inspired "Beale Street," the solemn "Strength and Courage" and the soulful "Walking A Straight Line." The Hurricanes upped the ante as the night went along, with Felix making his guitar cluck and pick around like a chicken on the requested rendition of "Rocky Top," the group showing their hard rocking chops on Focus' "Hocus Pocus" and Black Sabbath's "Fairies Wear Boots," and honoring the St. Paddy's season with an Irish tune – Van Morrison's "Brown Eyed Girl." See Felix & the Hurricanes every Sunday at the Black & Gold Tavern, and watch for some big show announcements from the group in the weeks ahead.

Every so often, work and play collide when I'm on the monthly PA Musician delivery trail…While delivering my Cambria County route during a Sunday afternoon last month, I did a lunch break at the Stadium Pub & Grille in Johnstown, where popular duo The Evergreens was in the midst of a matinee performance. This show almost didn't happen, as guitarist and singer Laurel injured her left hand the previous day, and was uncertain if swelling would subside enough to hold her guitar. Fortunately, the swelling did diminish, and she and drummer Amanda entertained the enclosed outdoor pavilion audience with a wide variety of rock'n'roll and pop favorites. Laurel and Amanda have crafted their own distinctive style and identity, giving upbeat and cheerful treatments to numbers by Bruce Springsteen, Soft Cell, the Beatles, CCR, Proclaimers, Pretenders, Tracy Chapman, Tommy James and many more. The Evergreens keep their repertoire unpredictable and fun – this day gearshifting from Oasis' "Champagne Supernova" into CCR's "I've Heard It Through the Grapevine," and from Cher's "Gypsies, Tramps & Thieves" into Outkast's "Hey Ya!" The Evergreens maintain a busy performance schedule throughout the region, including frequent daytime shows – so watch for them in your neighborhood.

On most Saturdays, I have a game plan – I know what show(s) I plan to check out, and I almost always stick with that game plan. But during winter season, the unpredictable can happen. The weather forecast for one Saturday last month called for up to 8 inches of snow, plus gusty winds and falling temperatures. I had work duties scheduled at my radio employer (Q94) this day – recording an interview and running the console for a high school basketball game broadcast. With the snow forecast, I expected both were going to need to be postponed, and I would be relegated to couch potato duties for the day. Well, the winter "bomb cyclone" event under-performed, the snow total never approached 8 inches, road conditions were manageable, and both of my radio duties went on as scheduled. So since I was now at the station, I decided to catch some live music afterward. Not only did I catch live mu-

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Dave "Snake" Sabo & Scotti Hill of Skid Row

sic, but I ended up attending THREE shows this evening, starting with my first-ever visit to Altoona's Iron Pint Brewing Company, where the acoustic duo of Matthew Sheedy and Rob Reffner were entertaining. Both strumming acoustic guitars and singing, Matthew and Rob played a wide mix of song material – including tunes from Michael Jackson, Old Crow Medicine Show, Deep Blue Something, Oasis, Green Day, Weezer, Red Hot Chili Peppers and more. They also performed the unexpected – including renditions of Dispatch's "Bang Bang" and "Two Coins," Incubus' "Certain Shade of Green" and John Butler Trio's "Good Excuse." Matthew and Rob's acoustic style was rhythmic and soulful, and they kept their music and overall pace upbeat. An added bonus was the guest acoustic duo of Julian Saborio and Ryen Beam performing during set breaks. These two were talented as well – Julian played guitar while Ryen sang on numbers from Dobie Gray, Pink Floyd, the Cars, Prince and more.

After departing the Iron Pint, I headed to another venue I had never visited…Under new ownership, Wilson's Fish Bowl Inn in Altoona is now running occasional acoustic entertainment, so I stopped by to enjoy food and the sounds of R.S. Williams and Tommy X's – better known as Railroad City Murder Machines frontman Randall Williams and X's For Eyes frontman Tom Noel. Both strumming acoustics and singing, Randall and Tom presented a unique mixture of well-known and lesser-known numbers. Both shared and swapped singing duties through songs from John Denver, Merle Haggard, Marshall Tucker Band, The Cure, Outfield, Weezer, Dolly Parton, Sublime, Tom Petty and more. But they also broke out such numbers as Frank Turner's "Substitute," the Misfits' "Saturday Night" and several other acoustic punk numbers.

And since Altoona's 4D's Lounge was on my way homeward from the Fish Bowl Inn, I stopped in to see Zac Grace – the musician I was interviewing earlier that afternoon at my radio gig – on the stage. Zac and his band – guitarists Ben Eberhart and Brad Lego, bassist Eric Wertz, keyboardist Nate Beatty and drummer Matthew Stevens – performed a blend of Zac's original songs and country favorites. Zac introduced some of his newer originals, such as "Stay Here or Stay Gone" and his latest single "PPL I Drink With." And he and the band did numbers from Luke Bryan, Chris Stapleton, Hank Williams Jr., Kentucky Headhunters, Brooks & Dunn, Kenny Chesney, Kip Moore, Garth Brooks and Toby Keith. And they also broke out some rock'n'roll; doing Stealer's Wheel's "Stuck in the Middle with You," John Mellencamp's "Hurts So Good" and Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Gimme Three Steps." Zac closed out the night with his original song, "This Is the Day," with its hopeful dream of pursuing your dreams. So I ended up seeing three shows on a day where I thought I would see none – Sometimes, things don't go as NOT planned!

JOOS in Altoona again hosted a showcase of the area's rising musical talent during their "The Clearing" event in late February. I arrived in time to hear the last two songs from the night's first performer, singer Ang Michaelle. Ang displayed a shining, soul-packed voice and confident stage presence on the two original songs I heard from her. She cited Lauryn Hill as an influence on her final song. Next up was Nik Mik, the solo incarnation of Lloyd frontman Nick Munyons. Nik's songs were generally short, sweet and to the point; conveying thoughts, emotions and wonder. Nik lives his songs on the microphone, and it was easy to realize that his singing was an extension of his persona. Next was my first look at southern Blair County-based singer and songwriter Shane Nycum. Shane's style of acoustic music was upbeat, as he performed modern rock-toned original songs with touches of funk and hip-hop. His presentation was sharp and confident, and he received a good response from the audience. Area singer and songwriter Braden McDannell followed with his distinctive folk rock/pop style. Braden mixed newer original songs with material from his 2020 album "East and West," displaying interesting melodies and focused vocal cadences. Some of Braden's songs included "At the Door," "No Sense," the newer "If and When," "Slow Down" and more. I had seen the next performer, Sasha Frost, in his electronics solo project Memory Collector, but witnessed him perform acoustic this night as he did a two-song set. Sasha did two numbers from Modest Mouse. Closing the evening was Vehement, the experimental music soundscape project of Brandon Spradling. Vehement explored the sonic possibilities of instruments, channeling a squeezebox and electric guitar through a myriad of distortion, tones, reverb and other effects. The results were intriguing, at times even hinting at some of the sonic experimentation of Syd Barrett and early Pink Floyd. "The Clearing" exposed the creative spirits of its five featured musicians in front of a supportive and appreciative audience.

TV Blonde brought their exciting party show to McGarvey's in late February. The group has a new lead singer these days, as Dallas James replaces the retiring Jackie Wesley. Dallas appeared right at home with TV Blonde's high-energy show, and handled the group's wide variety of song material well. TV Blonde's dance floor party mix included numbers from Katy Perry, Fountains Of Wayne, Loverboy, Green Day, 4 Non Blondes, Ramones, Roxette, No Doubt, Prince, Outkast, DNCE, Abba and many more. TV Blonde's mix of music, energy, wit and humor blend with lively visual production, including a busy light show and a TV monitor that shows constant scenes of people dancing from TV shows, movies, commercials and more. It all amounts to a potent and fun show – be on the lookout for the new-look TV Blonde in your neighborhood soon!

Also at McGarvey's, I saw an exciting punk-rocking triple-bill in late February. I arrived in time to catch the last couple of songs by openers Bad Luck Lover Boys. Both were new songs that sounded strong, and I expect to see Bad Luck Lover Boys again shortly. Next was Columbus, Ohio's The Plan B's. Featuring Joey Z on lead vocals, Josh T on guitar and vocals, Matty B on bass and Scott M on drums, The Plan B's drilled a mix of old-school pop punk, punk and ska with reckless abandon, firing off original numbers like "Off the Edge," "You Stink," "Parachutes," "F--- Ups & Grown Ups" and "Everyday Thing." The Snipped then unleashed 'dadcore' to end the night, as they played songs from their latest album "Tales from the Workbench" and a few select covers. Mike Wax, Jeff Reid, Frank Conrad and Justin Burket tore through

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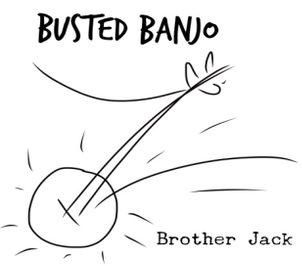
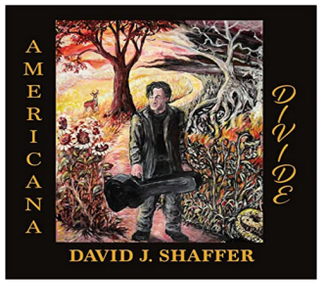
PA MUSICIAN REVIEWS

By Jim Price

BROTHER JACK – BUSTED BANJO (no label) For more than a decade, Brother Jack – the solo performer alter ego of Altoona area musician Jeremy Jack – has been generating his unique brand of "weird folk music and storytelling" in recordings and on area stages. Brother Jack frequently issues singles, EP's and albums via his Bandcamp page, and presents live-streaming performances almost daily on his Facebook page. On his latest album, Broken Banjo, Brother Jack channels seven of his song creations through – you guessed it – a 'broken' banjo. Jack's collective sound is deeply rooted in traditional folk, blues, gospel and foot-stomping jug band music – all which provide the backdrops for his storytelling and observational words about life, its simplicities and quirkiness. Jack appreciates the simple sounds of life, imperfect as they are, on the album's opening track, "Joyous Noise on a Busted Banjo," as he sings and toots some accompanying kazoo. He recalls a favorite breakfast cuisine and the pleasant memories it brings on "Pancakes on a Busted Banjo." Early back-porch blues informs Brother Jack's traveling ode "Pedal Down" and "Boom Boom Ticka Ticka." Critters also inspire Jack – a locust's exoskeleton and the song of a cricket trigger his contemplations on "Bugs," and snakes are capable of evil things on the broadcast commentary piece "Snake Ate My Radio" and a dying man's hallucinations via the album-closer "Valley of Dry Bones." Brother Jack is front and center here; he sings with passion, intention and personality with his hearty, gritty voice; and he makes that 'broken banjo' sing, peppering his soundscape with occasional harmonica, horn and kazoo accompaniment. The songs are simple and catchy, and his arrangements and mix are basic and lo-fi, giving this recording a rootsy, early 20th century aesthetic and vibe. In the process, Busted Banjo opens another door into Brother Jack's unique musical world, and listeners will experience his entertaining personality and minstrel-like charm. (The album can be obtained through Brother Jack's Bandcamp page, www.brotherjack.bandcamp.com. Brother Jack also livestreams breakfast performances most weekdays, plus his weekly Tuesday afternoon "Happy Hour" livestream on his Facebook page.)



DAVID J. SHAFFER – AMERICANA DIVIDE (no label) Hollidaysburg native David J. Shaffer cut his teeth on the central PA music scene in the 1980s, and was the frontman and bass player for Altoona area rockers Tight Squeeze. David's life direction eventually took him to the Portland, Maine area, where he performs as a singer and songwriter. David's latest album, Americana Divide, introduces listeners to his current musical world. That world is rooted in Americana folk and roots flavors, but stretches into avenues of rock'n'roll and country sounds over the album's duration. David sings and plays acoustic guitar, assisted by guitarist Nat Bailey, bassist Rick Coakley, drummer Paul J. Shaffer and backing singer Mckenzie Burke, plus several guests. His songs are largely inspired by personal life experiences, from the ins and outs of love to observations about today's world. David contemplates midlife crisis issues and his own finality on the gentle album opener "The Calling," and expresses lament over missed moments on the acoustic ode "Home Soon," with Andy Happel's violin accompaniment adding heart-tugging emotion to the arrangement. David sings of relationship crossed signals and quirks on the funk-tinged "Crazy on Our Minds," the harder-driving "Halfway" and the shuffling "Sea of Lost." The album's rock-driven title track, "Americana Divide," ponders divisions in today's society and how they came to be, while the short and acoustic "Reprise" later on offers hope for compromise and reconciliation. "Fly With Me" sets a gentle, hopeful tone, while the piano-driven "Pillow Talk" displays a Billy Joel-like vibe. David's son, Jonah D. Shaffer, adds tasty guitar licks to the punchy track "Ghost Towns." David caps the album with two bonus tracks; the witty social media commentary piece "The Facebook Song" and the humorous cannibal-themed country romp "Beans at Your Bar-B-Que." David delivers a strong album here; he shows a way with words, and his lyrics present a poetic quality and relatability. He sings it all with a smooth, steady and expressive voice, and fully invests himself in his words. The other musicians and guests all support and serve the melodies here, adding flavor and depth to the presentation. Recorded, mixed and produced by Jason Phelps at Acadia Recording Company in Portland, this album sounds clean and full, with David's voice and the instruments coming through clear and distinct in the mix. Americana Divide offers a rewarding listen as it immerses us in David J. Shaffer's musical space, and shows us his strong voice and gift of songcraft. (The album can be obtained through the website www.davidjshaffermusic.com.)



RANDALL PINK – PINKLAND EP (no label) Randall Pink is the original music project alter ego of Johnstown-based musician Randy Penrod, and the five-song EP Pinkland introduces listeners to Randall Pink's musical world. Randall Pink explores funk, rock and jazz frontiers; often crafting progressive-geared arrangements that experiment with various distortion, effects, reverb and adventures in groove. Randy wrote, sang and performed all the songs, as well as mixed and engineered the recording at Brokedown Chalice in Johnstown. Each number is uniquely different and ventures into a distinct sonic space. Leading off, "Turn Back Time" emerges into a funk-rock workout, with Randy singing reflective words about changing the past while embarking on soaring adventures with his guitar. "Tow the Line" explores a Memphis soul-styled avenue, complete with brassy riffs and organ flourishes to help flesh things out. "She Was Long" then shifts gears, heading into cavernous, distortion-laden, grungy heavy rock. "Black Velvet" follows by offering punchy, driving, melodic funk along a prominent bass line and busy percussion, setting the launching pad for Randy to explore the cosmos with spacy guitar solo work. Closing the set, the title instrumental "Pinkland" melds funk and jazz flavors, with Randy's guitar singing out the melody line along a keyboard underscore. All five numbers offer excitement and adventure, as Randall Pink pushes the boundaries of his creativity as a songwriter, singer and instrumentalist. His melodies and arrangements captivate, his vocals ride strong and soulful, and his guitar explorations vary, twist and turn, never staying in one place for long. The overall recording quality is clean, full and consistent, with all elements of Randall Pink's musical blend coming through sharp and clear. Randall Pink's first journey into Pinkland provides a fun listening adventure, as Randy Penrod explores the parameters of his musical creativity. (The recording can be accessed through YouTube, Apple Music and other online streaming platforms.)

The Professor continued....

songs off the new CD such as "Goddamn Shame," "The Mine," "No Time to Waste," "Be That Way," "Back in the Day," their hard-edged update of Bruce Springsteen's "Born to Run" and more. The Snipped opens for Richie Ramone at McGarvey's on April 1.

And I got to see Lloyd early last month at McGarvey's, part of a triple-bill with Treaties and Skyline Drive. Vocalist Nick Munyons, guitarist Devon Johnston, bassist Brandon Pry and drummer Matt Savino unleashed agitated rock that mixes elements of grunge and angst. They showcased original numbers this night, such as "More Pain," "Earth" and more. Against his bandmates' hard-edged sonic backdrops, Nick again demonstrated his chaotic stage persona; letting the moment's vibe carry him as he moved about the stage, sitting and laying down while running the gamut of emotions from subdued to emotional bloodletting.

I don't have the budget or the work schedule freedom to travel to St. Thomas in the Caribbean to check out a live performance any time in the foreseeable future, but thanks to Pittsburgh-rooted country duo Willow Hill and the innovation of live-streaming, I could experience such a show online. Willow Hill – the husband and wife pairing of C.T. and Alexandra Fields – is currently performing shows in St. Thomas through the end of this month. The duo's performance at Villa Fortuna just before St. Patrick's Day was live-streamed on Facebook. Alexandra on lead voice, tambourine and keys, and C.T. on guitar and backing vocals played their original songs, such as "Don't Threaten Me with a Good Time," "More Like a Memory," "Can't Have My Best" and "Are You Whiskey." They also did a version of Dolly Parton's popular "Jolene." Alexandra's voice and enthusiasm were in good form, and she and C.T. were instrumentally strong. An arriving tropical rain shower brought a quick conclusion to the performance. Willow Hill will head to Belize for some shows in early May, before returning to the U.S.

I also got to check out recent performances from Lloyd and The Snipped, both at McGarvey's.

News and notes…Images Of Eden announced that they have hooked up with guitar legend Michael Schenker for his 50th anniversary tour, as he supports his new album "Universal." Former Mr. Big singer Eric Martin is also on the tour, which will hit Pennsylvania in the fall…After a dozen years of entertaining area audiences with classic rock'n'roll, the band Cottonmouth announced that they are stepping away from area stages…After performing as an instrumental trio, The Pines have announced that Daman Mills is stepping aboard to handle lead vocal duties…Harrisburg's Steel announced that Kyle Stuhler will take over the lead microphone, replacing former frontman Chris Redding…Pittsburgh singer and songwriter Bill Deasy releases his new album, "If the Creek Don't Rise," this month…The area music scene was saddened by the passing of Johnstown area musician David Single on February 21; he was 53. David was a talented multi-instrumentalist, vocalist, songwriter, arranger and producer, and he was fluent in many styles of music. David is best remembered for his tenures in popular Johnstown-based groups The Boys and Ribbon Grass, where he played keys and sang. He also recorded several CD's and cassette albums, including jazz and Christmas albums.

Please send correspondence and recordings to: Jim Price, 1104 S. Catherine St., Altoona, PA 16602. You can also e-mail me at jptheprofessor@gmail.com. And if you're into social networking, look me up on Facebook. SUPPORT LOCAL MUSIC!

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